



Sustainable Monocacy Commission
Thursday, September 28, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.
Basement Conference Room
30 North Market Street, Frederick, MD

MINUTES

Members present: Gary Magnuson (Chair), Andrew Celmer (Vice-Chair) Lonnie Ropp, Matt Moran, Chuck Eirkson, Dr. Drew Ferrier, FCC President Brad Young, Alderwoman Katie Nash

County Staff: Kimberly Gaines, Karin Flom, Andrew Stine

The Sustainable Monocacy Commission's September meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. on Thursday, September 28, 2023.

Commission Chair Gary Magnuson opened the meeting with a roll call and a recognition that a quorum was present. As part of the roll call, all present members and staff briefly introduced themselves to Dr. Drew Ferrier, who assumed his role as a Member of the Commission in September 2023. Dr. Ferrier also provided a brief statement to the Commission regarding his background and his interest in the work of the Commission.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion of the August 24, 2023, draft meeting minutes. With no corrections noted by the Members of the Commission, Gary called for a motion to approve the draft meeting minutes for August 2023 as written. Matt Moran made a motion for approval that was seconded by Lonnie Ropp. Unanimous approval.

The Outreach Committee's report was next on the agenda. The topic of a potential list of recipients for the 2023 Monocacy River Report was revisited. Gary requested that the Outreach Subcommittee and any additional, interested volunteers coordinate with him in the collection of email addresses that will be forwarded to staff for cataloguing and then used to distribute an email to accompany the 2023 Monocacy River Report. Gary indicated that he would meet with FCC President Young to review the language of the email, and FCC President Young agreed to be the sender of the 2023 Monocacy Report email once the "cover email" language is completed and approved by staff.

Draft language for a future Monocacy Scenic River/Watershed brochure was the next item on the agenda. Chuck Eirkson requested additional time to review and edit the draft that was provided with the meeting materials. Lonnie Ropp made a motion to approve the language for incorporation into a brochure and for use in the video, pending the distribution of Chuck's edits to the entire Commission for a coordinated review by email. The motion was seconded by Matt Moran with unanimous approval.

The incorporation of the language from the brochure into a video was also discussed. Gary indicated that Kim Stewart had identified a potential voiceover provider, and additional efforts on video production would be possible following official adoption of the language.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion of the Commission's activities at the City of Frederick's "In the Streets" Festival held on September 9, 2023. Gary Magnuson provided a brief account of the setup and the event, and the Commission agreed the day was a productive use of the Commission's time. Gary invited suggestions from the members for potential items that could be added to the presentation materials/displays for the 2024 event. Some suggestions included the following:

- Lonnie Ropp recommended the acquisition of additional items that could be handed out or displayed to the public to draw interest and attention. Examples from the Frederick County Department of Energy and the Environment's stall (that was located near the SMC stall) included rain gauges and composting kits. It was noted that these exact items might not be suitable for the SMC, but some similar idea that involved "high-utility" to environmentally conscious visitors to the event may be considered.
- Matt Moran recommended the acquisition of a table wrap/banner for the table for next year's event. Additional displays or posters could also be helpful.
- Lonnie Ropp recommended the creation of an events calendar for display at future events that included potential Commission activities for participation by interested parties, including riverside clean-ups.
- FCC President Young recommended the addition of QR codes to a large format version of the access point map that could facilitate in the addition of location/navigation data related to various access points by the public.

Gary Magnuson also indicated that nineteen people who stopped by the Commission tent signed up to receive additional information regarding the Commission. He has already prepared and sent an email or text to all nineteen people, and he will forward copies of their contact information to staff for filing.

As an additional outreach activity to enhance visibility of the Commission, Chuck Eirkson inquired about the potential for the Commission to reach out to Frederick County Schools regarding presentations to students. Alderwoman Nash indicated that many schools have Green Teams that regularly participate in clean-up events around the community, and there may be potential for coordination with school Green Teams for clean-up events. Lonnie Ropp added that many students need to complete community service hours for organizations like National Honor Society and National Science Honor Society, and this could be yet another avenue for coordination and cooperation that would benefit the Monocacy River and provide students with community service opportunities. Matt Moran also indicated there may be potential to work with local scouting troops.

The Commission briefly revisited the topic of the vacant seat on the Commission and adjacency to the Monocacy River. FCC President Young raised the possibility of compiling a list of riverside property owners that might be contacted through mailings in a database. Additionally, a link to the Commission's 2023 report could be included in the mailing. Staff indicated they would explore the compilation of such

a list with the assistance of County GIS personnel. Lonnie Ropp added that a door-to-door outreach might be possible in some areas of the County.

This led to a discussion initiated by FCC President Young about the recent repeal of County legislation that required members of boards and commissions in Frederick County to be both registered voters and Frederick County residents (to expand the potential pool of applicants and expand student participation). Lonnie Ropp inquired about the staff report that had resulted from the Sustainable Monocacy Commission's previous consideration of ex-officio student membership, and staff indicated that a staff report had been drafted. However, the staff report had been held back due to the Council's considered repeal of the legislation that required that all boards and commissions be comprised of registered voters and residents. Staff indicated that, now that the legislation setting the voting and residency requirements for all boards and commissions has been repealed, it should be possible to advance the staff report regarding legislation for the Commission to add ex-officio student members. FCC President Young stated that he would support such legislation, but he added that the Commission should consider other amendments they might be interested in advancing into one comprehensive package. It was noted that these revisions could also include the allowance of property owners adjacent to tributaries to the Monocacy River to fill one of the vacant seats that had previously been reserved for members adjacent to the main branch of the Monocacy River only.

The Commission then moved on to Unfinished Business and a discussion of the Monocacy River Access Point inspections. Gary indicated that only one inspection remains, and the present members indicated that it would be prioritized. The Commission's goal is to have all inspections finalized by the October meeting. Gary briefly summarized the reasoning behind the inspections and his strategy for sharing results with the City and County Parks and Recreation Divisions. Gary inquired about additional parties that may be furnished with the results, and Matt Moran stated that Maryland DNR may be a potential recipient. FCC President Young stated that the County Council and County Executive's office could also be potential recipients. Gary also briefly discussed his interaction with the city's Parks and Recreation staff regarding a potential cleanup at Riverside Park.

Next, Chair Gary Magnuson presented a copy of the items to be considered prior to the FY 24-25 budget/CIP process and asked that members review and provide feedback to him regarding the preliminary list furnished at the August meeting. The Commission revisited the potential funding of the position at the County level to assist the agricultural sector in crafting Nutrient Management Plans. The Commission discussed the recent farm tour and presented correspondence from the Farm Bureau regarding issues facing the agricultural community. Gary indicated he is continuing to follow the efforts of a Maryland State Task Force that is attempting to address the backlog in conservation plan writing and other topics.

Regarding budgets and legislation, Alderwoman Nash stated that the City of Frederick will be holding an upcoming meeting regarding the City of Frederick's priorities for the upcoming Maryland State Legislative Session, and she will share information with Commission members about how they might be able to provide feedback on legislative priorities.

On a related note, Gary mentioned that staff in the City of Frederick's Sustainability Office have also contacted him about potential, future opportunities to coordinate efforts with the Commission regarding sustainability and the Monocacy River.

Prior to the end of the meeting, the Chair and Members of the Commission provided the following updates and event notifications:

- Gary raised the possibility of moving the meeting from the 4th Thursday of each month to the 3rd Thursday. Previously meetings had been held on the 3rd Thursday, but scheduling conflicts resulted in a shift to the 4th Thursday. Members generally indicated that the 4th Thursday works best for availability, so meetings will continue to occur on the 4th Thursday. FCC President Young stated that renovations in Winchester Hall are currently under way, and a new meeting room will be constructed on the 1st floor that may be available to the Commission upon completion.
- Gary stated that he and Vice-Chair Andy Celmer attended County-sponsored meeting training at Winchester Hall on September 21st and September 22nd. As part of that training, an online training course for the Maryland Open Meetings Act was discussed. Gary encouraged all members of the Commission to consider completing the online training as time allows.
- Lonnie Ropp informed the Members that the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek is hosting an Oktoberfest on the weekend of September 30, 2023, and volunteer opportunities are still available. All proceeds from the event are provided to local non-profit organizations in Frederick City and Frederick County through a grant process. Parties interested in volunteering can contact her.
- On a related note, Lonnie mentioned that the launch of this year's grant program is imminent, and that details are available on the web site of the Rotary Club of Carroll Creek.

As a final item, Chair Gary Magnuson summarized those items and actions discussed throughout the meeting as well as action items for Commission members.

With no additional business, the September 2023 meeting of the Sustainable Monocacy Commission was adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:42 p.m.